



## New reporting standards will strengthen state's information technology security

The Georgia Technology Authority is responsible under state law for establishing technology security standards and services to be used by all agencies.

An Executive Order signed by Governor Perdue will help to protect state data by establishing information security reporting standards.

State government is entrusted with important data to provide services to Georgians. Ensuring the security of that data protects citizens and keeps government operating efficiently.

- In the past 3 years, the state has issued over 4 million notification letters to citizens whose private information has been exposed from state computers.
- Every minute, GTA's firewall systems block between 5,000 and 35,000 inappropriate connection attempts.
- Every day, GTA's intrusion prevention systems deny access to another 10,700 connections that attempt to perform inappropriate actions on the state's network; the number is down from 15 million per day two years ago.
- In addition to GTA, there are 87 separate agency-level information security programs.
- Of these 88 programs, 28 (32 percent) are able to produce a list of the information systems within their program.
- 63 of the state's 88 high impact systems have never had a security assessment.
- 65 of the state's 79 moderate impact systems have never had a security assessment.
- Only 23 agencies have assigned someone to create business continuity plans.

Because state agencies have used a variety of reporting standards, it has been difficult to get a clear, comprehensive measure of information security across state government.

GTA is working with agencies to develop a single set of technical security standards that every agency will use. The technical standards will follow the model developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technologies (NIST) in support of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002.

GTA is working with the Department of Audits and Accounts to ensure consistency with all auditable standards.

For state agencies participating in the consolidation and outsourcing of IT infrastructure services, GTA will assist in collecting data necessary to complete their information security reports. The outsourcing procurement is an intensive, time-consuming effort requiring a great deal of time and attention from key IT staff in participating agencies.

## Benefits

State leaders will have the information they need to oversee the security of the state's IT resources.

A comprehensive framework will ensure that the state's information security controls are effective across the enterprise.

The reporting standard will allow for differing requirements of state agencies and their federal partners.

The reporting standards will enable the state to identify risks and set priorities for corrective actions without exposing vulnerabilities to inappropriate parties.

The state will be better able to control associated expenses by utilizing agency-level risk management practices.

## Next steps

GTA will work with the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget to develop a reporting format and required content for agency information security reports. The requirements will be sent to state agencies by March 31 of each year.

By July 31 of each year, agencies are to submit their information security reports to GTA for the fiscal year ending the preceding June 30.

GTA will compile agency reports into a single Enterprise Information Security Report, available by October 31 of each year.

GTA will develop a score card for agency reports similar to the score card used at the federal level ([www.whitehouse.gov/omb/infoereg/reports/2006\\_fisma\\_report.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/infoereg/reports/2006_fisma_report.pdf))